Connecticut Historical Society BULLETIN

Volume 12 Hartford, July 1947 Number 3

Eighteenth Century Writing Sheet, Abel Buell and James Rivington, colored, 13 x 16¼ inches.

Writing sheets were provided schoolboys so they could exhibit their progress in penmanship. The one illustrated on the preceding page was filled in by Matthew Talcott while he was a student at Mr. Kinne's school in Norwich. Newcomb Kinney (1761-1846) was for a short time principal of a school in Norwich. He was apparently a good teacher for Matthew Talcott's second piece is a delightful example of early penmanship.

The form itself is of great interest to us for the imprint, readily viewed at the bottom of our reproduction, is tangible evidence of a partnership long suspected and known to exist. Just what it was has been conjectured, and the discovery of the writing sheet merely serves to prove earlier suppositions. Mr. Lawrence C. Wroth wrote an excellent monograph on Abel Buell, published by the Acorn Club in 1926. Our writing sheet and one in The New York Historical Society have been discovered since. There is no reason to repeat what Mr. Wroth has written, but for the sake of clarity it would seem logical to include a short sketch of known facts relating to James Rivington and Abel Buell, who in partnership produced this writing sheet.

According to a memorial, document 156a, Revolutionary Archives, Series 1, Volume 23 in the Connecticut State Library, Samuel Shethar, brother of John Shethar of Litchfield, was an apprentice to Abel Buell, and in December 1774 went with Buell to Pensacola, Florida, where he continued to serve until his apprenticeship expired in April 1776. This may be of particular significance, for it proves Buell was in Florida although probably too late to verify his suspected part in engraving Bernard Romans' map of East and West Florida. Rivington is the reputed publisher of the map and volume of history, which again may indicate relations between Buell and Rivington.

On February 11, 1775 James Rivington brought suit in the New Haven County Court against Abel Buell for £500 York money. From the previously cited memorial, Abel Buell was in Florida, so that his wife was left with the task of straightening his financial affairs. She advertised in *The Connecticut Journal, and the New-Haven Post-Boy* for February 22, 1775:

> All persons indebted to Mr. Abel Buell, are hereby desired forthwith to settle their accounts with cash, as he has left strict orders with me to put those in suit that are not paid in six weeks after his departure, which orders I am determined to comply with literally and without regard to persons.
>
> And whereas Mr. Rivington of New-York, has proceeded to the extraordinary step of attaching our house and everything in it, without any previous request of me to pay him, which attachment has been followed by a few others, from uneasy persons, for paltry sums even of shillings. I therefore request all creditors, if any there be (though I know of none, and believe there are none of any note, besides the government) to suspend their apprehensions a little while and set aside their fears.
>
> And as Mr. Buell has lately been blamed for carrying away some debtors of evil note, I request the favour of every one, not to be too hasty of belief; I hope it is not true; but as all men's characters that are calumniated, require some immediate proof in their favour, and perhaps Mr. Buell's on some accounts especially, I

hereby notify to all his creditors, or even to any indifferent persons who choose to see it, that I can with very little trouble, (by stubborn facts, in the shape of Rivington's own figures, letters, invoices and receipts) prove that Mr. Buell owes him only £175 lawful, and tho' Mr. Buell has not left me cash, yet I am in possession of enough to pay that sum thrice over; and further I can shew, that Mr. Buell has done Rivington such services, as intitle the latter to the stile and title of an ingrate, and from me that of an inhuman varlet. Wanted, one or two Journeymen Goldsmiths, and one Journeyman Jeweller, who will meet with good encouragement, as I intend to carry on the business as usual, of which our friends are requested to take notice. Such of Mr. Buell's creditors as he owes small sums to, and dare not stay till I get cash, may immediately be paid in work.

ALETTA BUELL.

New-Haven. Feb. 21, 1775.

Apparently Aletta Buell meant what she said, for the New Haven County Court Records for January 15, 1776 granted judgement in the name of Abel Buell against Oliver Hanchit of Suffield for £25 lawful money. This action was commenced February 23, 1775 so we must conclude Aletta Buell was the plaintiff, though the record is in the name of her husband. When execution was granted, the plaintiff appeared, and the defendant appeared not; again we must assume it was Aletta Buell, for her husband was still away from Connecticut (according to all existing records) until some time around May, 1778.

The case between Rivington and Buell was continued from court to court. Finally in December 1779, Buell appeared and the "Plaintiff being called three times, appeared not, . . . it is thereupon considered that the Defendant shall recover of the Plaintiff cost, tax, et al." Decision in this case was undoubtedly influenced by Rivington's loyalist activities in New York, which were well known to the court and made his position such he could not prosecute in Connecticut courts.

A partnership involving an amount as large as £500 probably included a number of items. One at least was the writing sheet. Our copy was not used until 1792, which could imply that ownership was not determined until the settlement of their suit in late 1779. How long the attachment of house and belongings continued is not known, but chances are that Rivington, doing the press work, kept the sheets until some agreement was finally reached. This would account for such a late use when in reality they were engraved prior to December 1774.

In any event, the engraving is a fine example of Buell's work and increases his stature as an engraver. This Library now has examples of all known engraved works by Buell. Generally considered as the earliest line engraving in Connecticut, his *Abner Parker's Chart of Saybrook Barr* is known only in our copy. We have his map of the United States in 1784, which is claimed to be the first map of the new political division to be compiled and engraved by one of its citizens. It is excessively rare, there being at the time of Mr. Wroth's book, only one other copy. We have a Yale diploma of D. William Lockwood, 1777, which is engraved by "A. Buell Sculp". We

also have a copy of Bernard Romans' map of *Connecticut and parts adjacent*, 1777, which may have been engraved by Abel Buell. This copy is perhaps the third state, mentioned by Thompson, since the town of Southbury appears both east and west of the Naugatuck River. These engravings will shortly be on exhibition and we should be delighted to show them to any who are interested.

In conclusion, it might be well to add that the Saybrook Barr chart has been preserved recently at a cost of $9. We should like also to have the map of the United States mounted in our folio map book, so that it too can be assured preservation in the future. Roll maps are a very difficult problem, for kept in that state they rapidly disintegrate. We are mounting them flat in heavy board covers so they may be easily consulted and also protected from various hazards. This map, 41 x 46 inches, can be processed for approximately $20. Contributions for this purpose will be gratefully accepted and are deductible from federal taxes.

NEWS OF THE SOCIETY

A talk was given at the April meeting by Kenneth R. Andrews of Cambridge, Massachusetts, entitled "Mark Twain's Hartford Re-Appraised". Mr. Andrews is completing the requirements for a Ph.D. degree and his talk was based upon the dissertation he is writing.

Mrs. H. Arnold Hamilton read a paper on "Noah Webster" at the May meeting. Particular stress was placed on the "Speller" and "Dictionary", and an intimate picture of Webster's home life and character was given.

Also at the May meeting, a revision of our By-Laws was adopted. This step was made necessary by a need for increased revenues for operating expenses. Our annual income from dues has averaged slightly more than $900 from nearly 550 members. This is far short of requirements and rather than increase dues generally, it was decided to place them on a voluntary basis. In short, the dues of members remain the same unless they wish to change their status of membership. Only officers, who previously paid $2, must now change and become, at least, Active Members at $3.00. Associate members are those who pay $2; they may not vote or hold office. Active members are the $3 class, and may vote and, if residents of Connecticut, may hold office. Contributing members pay $10, and thus share a greater proportion of our necessary expense. It is hoped many of you will change to the Contributing class, for our continued growth is based upon additional funds for the restoration and preservation of Connecticut materials.

The Annual Meeting was held May 20, at which time the incumbent officers were reelected except in two instances. Mr. Henry A. Castle, long time chairman of the Library Committee, requested relief from these duties and was replaced by Mr. John M. K. Davis. Mr. Harlow, Librarian of the Society, was replaced on the Library Committee by Dr. Ernest R. Caulfield, formerly Librarian of the Hartford Medical Society.

MARQUIS OF HAMILTON DOCUMENT

The following document was recently presented the Society by Dr. Lee Jay Whittles of Glastonbury. It seemed so interesting we asked Mr. Roy V. Coleman, an authority on the Warwick Patent, if he would not write the introduction to a printing of the document. His remarks follow:

"With a view to the planting of English settlers in northern North America, King James I in 1620 created a company known as the Council for New England. To this Council he granted that part of America lying roughly between Philadelphia and the Gaspé region, and reaching westward to the Pacific; and from grants made by it every legally established colony in New England, prior to 1635, took its title. But when the Massachusetts Bay Colony added a royal patent to a rather hazy grant from the Council, it became obvious to the members of the Council that if they were to preserve their rights and authority it would be necessary for them to act as individual Proprietors over limited areas rather than as an ill-organized and ineffective group. Accordingly on February 3, 1635, the members, among whom the Marquis of Hamilton was one, met and divided up the coast of New England among themselves. In this division Hamilton received as his province the area from the Connecticut River to Narragansett Bay and sixty miles inland. To become valid this grant from the Council required a confirming patent from the King. Whether Hamilton intended to take out such a patent or not is doubtful. In any case the English Civil Wars came along and Hamilton lost his head. Meanwhile Roger Williams secured from the Warwick Committee of Parliament a preliminary patent for Rhode Island which was confirmed by Charles II on his restoration; and in 1662 young John Winthrop also secured from the King a patent for Connecticut. At that point the heirs of Hamilton began to take an interest. They petitioned the King for a restoration of their rights, and when in 1664 royal Commissioners were appointed to come to America and straighten out affairs, they called upon Connecticut to show why the Hamilton title might not be considered valid. It is probable that the document printed below accompanied the letter from the Commissioners to Connecticut and was a part of the exhibit of title presented by Hamilton's heirs. Connecticut made an evasive and lengthy reply challenging the indentification of the land granted to Hamilton and setting up a questionable prior claim. In addition, the General Assembly presented the Commissioners with five hundred bushels of corn. The Commissioners decided in favor of Connecticut, and this decision ended any hope of success for the Hamilton claim in New England."

> This Indenture made the two and Twentieth day of Aprill in the Eleventh year of the reign of our Sovereign Lord Charles by the Grace of God King of England, Scotland France, and Ireland defender of the Faith &c; Between the Councill Established at Plymouth in the County of Devon, for the Planting, Ordereing Ruling and Governing of New-England in America of the one Part, and the Right Honourable James Marquess Hamilton of the other part Witnesseth, That whereas our Late Sovereign Lord King James of Blessed memory by his Highness Letters Pattents under the Great Seal of England bearing date at Westminster the third Day of November, in the Eighteenth year of his Highness Reign over the Realm of England, for the Considerations in the Same Letters Pattents Expressed, Hath Absolutely given, granted, and confirmed unto the Said Councill And their Successors forever, all the Lands in New-England, in America Lying

& being in breadth from Fourty degrees of Northern Lattitude from the Equinoctial Line To Fourty Eight degrees of the Said notherly Lattitude Inclusively, and In length of, & within all the breadth aforesaid, throughout the main Land from Sea, to Sea, together also with all the Firm Lands, Soyles, Grounds, Havens, Ports, Rivers, Waters Fishings, Mines, and Mineralls, as well Royal mines of Gold, and Silver as other mines, & mineralls, precious Stones, Quarries and all, and Singular other Commodities, Jurisdictions, Royalties, Priviledges Franchises and Prehemineences both within the said Tract of Land upon the Main and also upon the Islands, & Seas adjoyning as by the Said Letters Pattents amongst divers other things therein Contained, more at Large it doth & may Appear. Now this Indenture further Witnesseth, That the said Councill in performance of an Agreement made by & between themselves & Enacted the third day of February last past, before the date of this Present, for A Competent Sum of Money, and also for other good Causes and Considerations them the Said Councill hereunto more Especially moving, Have Given, granted, bargained, Sold Enfeoffed And Confirmed, and by these Presents do Give, grant, bargain, Sell, Enfeoff, and Confirm unto the said James Marquess Hamilton his Heirs & Assigns all that Part Purport And Portion of Main Lands of New-England aforesaid Scituate lying & begining at the middle part of the Mouth, or Entrance of the River of Connecticutt in New England, and from thence to proceed along the Sea Coast to the narohigansetts River, or Harbour, there to be accounted about sixty miles, and up the Western Arm to the head thereof, and into the Land North Westward till Sixty miles be finished, & so to Cross over Land Southwestwards to meet with the End of Sixty miles to be accounted from the Mouth of Connecticut up North West and also All Islands, & Islets as well[.....?]bayed as With five Leagues distance from the Premises, and Abutting upon the same, or Any Part or Parcel thereof not otherwise Granted to any by Special Name, all which part, And Portion of Lands & Premises, shall from hence forth be called by the name of the County of New Cambridge, and also the Said Councill for the Consideration aforesaid, have Given granted, bargained Sold enfeoffed & Confirmed, and by these Presents do Give grant Bargain, Sell, Enfeoff, & Confirm unto the Said James Marquess Hamilton his Heirs and Assigns All that other Part or Portions of Lands Woods, and Wood grounds, lying on the East Side of the River of Sagadehock in the Easterly Part of New England aforesaid, Containing & to Contain there ten thousand Acres, and to be hadd, and taken together as Conveniently as the Same may be towards the head of the said River and next unto the Lands of Edward Lord Georges there, which from henceforth is to be Called by the name of And moreover the Said Councill for the Considerations aforesaid have Given, Granted, bargained, Sold Enfeoffed and Confirmed, and

by these Presents do give grant bargain, Sell Enfeoff and Confirm unto the Said James Marquess Hamilton his heirs and Assigns, together with the Said Bargained Premises, all the firm Lands Soyls, grounds, Havens Ports, rivers, Waters Fishings, Mines, and Mineralls, as well Royal Mines of Gold and Silver as other mines, and mineralls Precious Stones, Quarries, and all, and Singular other Commodities Jurisdictions, Royalties Priviledges Franchises and Preheminences both within the said Tracts of Lands upon the main, and also within the Islands and Seas adjoyning Saving, excepting and reserving out of this present Grant onely the fifth part of the Oar of Gold, and Silver due to his Majesty his Heirs, And Successors and in and in and by the Said Letters Pattents Reserved, To have and to hold all those the Said Several Parcells of Land, and all other the Said Bargained Premises, with their, & every of their Appurtenances (Except before Excepted) unto the said James Marquess Hamilton his Heirs and Assigns, to the only propper Use, and behoof of him the Said James Marquess Hamilton and his Heirs and Assigns for Ever, and to be Enjoyed fully freely and In as large ample and beneficial manner, and form to all Intents and purposes whatsoever as they the Said Councill, and their Successors, by virtue of the Said Recited Letters Pattents may, might, or ought to have, hold, and Enjoy the Same or any part thereof—In Witness whereof to the one Part of this Present Indenture remaining in the hands of the said James Marquess Hamilton, they the Said Councill have fixed their Common Seal, and to the other Part of this Present Indenture remaining in the hands of the said Councill, the said Marquess hath Set his hand and Seal, Dated the Day & Year first above written, Annoq Domini 1635 This is a true and Authentick Copy of the Principal Indenture first above written, under the Seal above Specified, duly compared & Collationed, by us Notaries Publick underscribing in the Presence of the Witnesses after named, as doth witness our Sign & Subscription Manuall at Hamilton 12th May 1664.

J: HAMILTON, *Witness*
Jo: CARBARNES, *Witness*
WILL: HAMILTON: *Witness*
J. MOTHERSPOON *Witness*

R: HAMILTON, *Notarius Publicus*
Ja: CARBARNES, *Notarius Publicus*

A True Copie WILLIAM BLATHWAITE

ASAPH SMITH'S ACCOUNT BOOK

(Continued from page 16)

April 8 Capt James Francis Died
Aged 75
Wife of Lewis Botsford Aged 28
Seth Hookers Child Aged 1
The wife of Hunter

August
A Child of Col[n] Botsford
Quinlins Child
Luther Stocking Aged 80
James Eltons Child
Elisha Curtis

Account of the Deaths in 1834

Horase Haskill, Wife Died	Jan[r] 2	Aged	26
Brion Newel,s Wife Died	Jan[r] 21	"	27
Lucy Carter	Jan[r] 21	"	45
James Masters	Jan[r] 23	"	
M[r] Edward Peck Died	March 11	"	57
M[r] Bunil Died	March 18	"	81
M[r] Samuel Cowles Died	March 30		81
W[d] Ruth Hopkins—April 1[st]	1		77
the wife of Jabez Cowles			
W[d] Hannah Shepherd	Sep[t]		74
M[r] Caleb J. Hall—Oc[t]	17		
Amy Stanley wife of Shelden			
Stanley Died	Dec[r] 11	Agd	31
M[r] Isaac Peck Died	Dec[r] 19	Aged	82

Deaths In the Year—1835

M[r] Amos Gridley Died	Jan[r] 2	Aged	
Child of Norman Warners			
W[d] Millicent Hollister	Feb[r] 22		83
Adline Dickenson	March 9		13
Samuel Hart Esq[r] ——	March 27		74
Emily Hart	April 3		30
Infant Child of Rufsel Peck	April		
George Hookers Child	April		1
M[r] Norman Winchel,	May 3		
James Elton,s Child	Aug 13		
W[d] Abbigail Buck	August 21		88
W[d] Julia Winchel	Aug[t] 24		

An Account of the Deaths In the Year 1836

Rev[r] Royal Robins Child died	Jan[r] 2	Aged
W[d] Mary Hart	Jan[r] 12	89
M[r] Ruben Peck,s Child	March—16	

Deaths In 1837

M[r] Page,s Daughter		
Deaths In the yeare 1837		Age
Foriner Died at N Warners		
Mrs Doratho Stocking	July 20	57
Mrs. Ludia Peck	August 23	31

Deaths for the year 1859

M[r] Silvester Elton died January 17 1859

(To be continued)

The price of these Bulletins is ten cents each.